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ABSTRACT

Under the Title I Secondary Reading Program in the Kansas City, Missouri School District, two to four reading consultants were assigned to each building to assist social studies and English teachers in grades 7 through 10. The reading consultants and the secondary reading coordinator were responsible for planning and conducting a monthly inservice teacher workshop. The purpose was to help the content teachers understand the nature of reading and increase their ability to teach reading skills at the same time the content is taught. As a result of an inventory questionnaire completed by participating teachers, it was decided that word recognition skills should be taught first, with at least three workshops devoted to these skills. In addition to the eight scheduled workshops, the Materials Preparation Center provided inservice sessions to help develop innovative materials and teaching strategies for secondary students. At least one workshop provided a demonstration class for teacher observation and critique. In addition, a monthly inservice meeting was conducted for the reading consultants to increase their ability in working with the teachers. The inservice program was evaluated by classroom observations made by the reading consultants and coordinator and by an evaluation form completed by teachers after each workshop. (AW)

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Symposia IV - Preparing Specialists In Reading

SECTION TOPIC: The Classroom Teacher - Secondary

TOPIC OF PAPER: In-Service Training Emphasis

Too often teachers in the secondary schools assume that pupils entering junior and senior high schools have adequate reading ability -- adequate to the extent that pupils can read and assimilate any content material. Some students do have this ability, but a significant percent of inner-city children need much instructional guidance in basic reading skills to be effective readers.

ORGANIZATION

The Title I Secondary Reading Program of the Kansas City, Missouri School District is organized in such a way that reading skills are developed at the same time the content is being taught. From two to four reading consultants are assigned as part of the certified staff in each building. The number assigned to each school is determined by pupil enrollment. The reading consultants assist social studies and English teachers who teach the "C" classes in grades seven through ten.

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Their mutual goal is improving the reading ability of as many students as possible.

In order to accomplish this goal, it has been necessary to provide in-service training for the content area teachers in the program.

A reading consultant works with four classroom teachers in implementing the use of certain basic reading skills which prove practical in the teaching of English or social studies. The first phase of in-service training was the reading consultant assisting and instructing the classroom teacher by the following procedures:

1. Conferring, planning and evaluating at least one hour per week
2. Demonstrating in the classroom the techniques, methodology and basic skills used in the teaching of reading
3. Securing appropriate materials, both in content and readability

ASSUMPTIONS

As the Reading Program progressed, it became apparent that some type of additional training besides classroom demonstrations was needed based on the following assumptions:

1. English and Social Studies Teachers Need More Knowledge about Reading Pedagogy. They, also, need more empathy for their students who have reading deficits. This is not to say that content teachers lack instructional competence in their area and at their level, but too few have had any training in the teaching of reading. Therefore, they are not prepared to teach reading at the level most of their students are functioning.
2. Many Teachers' Major Concern Is Covering Content. It is difficult to convince teachers that covering so many pages per day is

no assurance that students have mastered the material. One of the biggest problems for junior and senior high teachers is knowing how to diagnose the reading level at which a pupil is reading. Thus, there is a need to prepare these teachers so that they will be able to continually diagnose each student's strengths and weaknesses in both reading and content and prescribe reading therapy.

3. Continuous In-Service is Necessary in a Successful Program.
   The success of achieving the goal of the secondary program will depend upon the capabilities of the content teacher. Thus, in-service can be structured according to specific teacher needs.

It was felt that monthly in-service workshops were a must if there was to be a change in teacher behavior in the classroom. It was hoped that the content area teachers would find that by helping students deal more effectively with materials, they would see pupil growth both in comprehension of the content and mastery of reading skills needed to achieve their reading level.

OBJECTIVES FOR IN-SERVICE

The following objectives were the basis for planning the workshops to help content area teachers:

1. assume the responsiblity and practicality for the development of better reading skills
2. gain a clear understanding of decoding, reading and study skills
3. detect the skill weaknesses of the groups with which they work
4. help pupils apply known reading skills to the content work
5. use the directed reading lesson approach in teaching the content material

6. regulate his assignments in accordance with the abilities and needs of his pupils

OPERATION

During the school year 1969-70 in-service building workshops were conducted monthly in each building on school time for the classroom teachers being serviced.

These building workshops were scheduled twice in the same day so that all teachers working in the program would have an opportunity to attend the one that coincided with his planning hour. In a few instances it was necessary to have a teacher aide take care of the class while the teacher attended. The purpose of this in-service was two-fold:

1. to help the content subject teachers understand the nature of reading
2. to help these same teachers increase their ability to teach reading skills

The responsiblity for the planning of these workshops was assumed by the secondary reading coordinator and each buildings' reading consultants with the approval of the principal.

The problem was how to plan effective in-service training for the content area teachers involved. Keeping in mind that the students serviced in the reading program were those who read two or more years below grade level, it was known that much corrective and remedial instruction was needed.

How much did the teachers already know about reading skills? What were the concerns of the teachers as they began to work with their groups?

In order to make these workshops as practical as possible, an inventory type questionnaire was prepared and given to the participating teachers in each building. The questionnaire had to do with terminology and generalizations pertaining to the teaching of reading. The teachers could ask for clarification, examples and/or ideas for teaching the items listed. Only eighteen of the forty-nine items on the questionnaire are shown below. More than fifty percent of the teachers requested help on the nineteen items listed.

TERMINOLOGY AND GENERALIZATIONS

For which of the following would you like information? Please check as to the kind of information you would like.

Items	Clarification	Example	Ideas for Teaching
WORD RECOGNITON (DECODING)			
affix			
prefix			
suffix			
derived form			
heteronym			
syllable			
root or base word			
open syllable			
closed syllable			
major patterns for dividing words into syllables			
COMPREHENSION SKILLS			
main ideas			
sequential order			
interpretation			
inferred meanings			
work study skills			
outlining			
map reading			

As a result of the questionnaire, it was decided to teach the word recognition skills first. Since an hour was all the time available for each session, it was then decided that at least three workshops needed to be devoted to word recognition skills -- phonetics, structural analysis and syllabication. The reading consultants in each building assumed the responsibility of instruction for six of the eight workshops scheduled. The secondary reading coordinator planned and conducted the other two. In addition there was in-service provided by the Materials Preparation Center (a service of the Division of Urban Education) to help develop innovative materials and teaching strategies for the secondary students. At least one workshop was planned so that the teachers could observe the reading consultant teach a group of students. After the thirty minute demonstration, the teachers as a group critiqued the lesson.

Hand-outs were available at each workshop. These included definitions of terms related to the subject, suggested procedures for teaching, and sample exercises. The sample exercises gave the teachers varied ideas for making their own study guides or follow-up materials to meet the needs of their groups.

In addition to the in-service for the content area teachers a monthly in-service meeting was conducted for the secondary building reading consultants. A somewhat different approach was used for this in-service because all of the consultants are certified in reading and have a great deal of expertise in teaching. The major purpose of these meetings was to add to the consultants repertoire which hopefully would enable them to be even more effictive in their role of working with the classroom teacher.

CONCLUSIONS

Two methods were used to evaluate the in-service training. The most important was observation in the classroom by the reading consultant and/or coordinator. The purpose of the observations was to determine the effect of the in-service program on teachers' classroom behavior and attitudes. The other was an evaluation form used after each workshop that was completed without signatures by each teacher attending. According to these evaluation sheets, the general reaction thus far has been one of approval if the comments reflect the true feelings of the participating teachers. However, the classroom observations tell a somewhat different story. Positive changes in the attitudes of many teachers have occurred. This is based on observation of teachers' behavior and attitudes as reflected by their: (1) willingness to cooperate; (2) placing students at the correct instructional level; and (3) use of innovative methods and materials that students find interesting, challenging and rewarding. However, the reading consultants and coordinator agree that approximately forty percent of the teachers involved will require a great deal more help to cause effective change in their behavior.

Although the primary goal of the in-service was to change teacher behavior, the ultimate goal was positive change in the pupils' academic achievement. The following is a summary of an evaluation questionnaire answered by forty-three classroom teachers regarding changes noted in their students.

Pupil Academic Achievement, Behavior and Attitude

	No Improvement	Some Improvement	Considerable Improvement
A. Class Attendance	17	21	5
B. Pupils' Interest in Reading	3	26	14
C. Pupils' Attention Span	5	29	9
D. Pupils' Self-Image	5	28	9
E. Attitude toward School	11	24	8
F. Verbal Improvement	3	30	10
G. Pupils' Classroom Performance	6	23	14
H. Pupils' Independent Reading	7	25	10

The following comments were made by the same teachers on another section of the questionnaire.

The reading consultants provided variety in the lessons.

The reading consultants introduced new techniques and methods.

The students acquired a better vocabulary.

Enthusiasm was generated.

The subject matter was geared to the students' abilities.

The pupils improved in specific reading skills.

There was great improvement in students' attitudes toward the reading program.

The school year 1969-70 was the only year pre and post tests were not given in the ten month period. The eighth grade was the only grade with pre and post test scores on a comparable test. The Reading section of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills was given in May, 1969 to seventh graders and a post test in May, 1970 to the eighth graders. Eight hundred sixty-four

students were given the pre test and five hundred ninety-two students the post test. These results are given by mean grade equivalent scores:

N	FY 69	N	FY 70	Change
864	5.68	592	6.21	+.53 years

The results as shown from the standardized test did not demonstrate as much improvement as was hoped but did show that growth is still being made.

This year Form A of The Advanced Metropolitan Reading Test was administered the second week of September to all students in grades seven through ten who are serviced in the program. Form B will be administered the third week of May. It is hoped this pre and post testing will reflect the growth that the personnel believes they are making.

It would seem that the program has been moderately successful since the Kansas City, Missouri school district has implemented the same type of program (on a lesser scale) in six other area high schools.